SECTION II

Literacy Framework

Definition of Literacy:

Within the context of the Arizona State Literacy Plan, the term literacy is defined as the ability to effectively communicate in a wide variety of complex settings through:

* the utilization of visual literacy
* perceptive thinking and listening skills
* articulate and fluent language and speaking skills
* proficient and comprehensive reading skills
* and convincing, powerful, and compelling writing skills.

The integration of these language processes provides learners, in a continuum of development, the opportunity to think deeply while actively acquiring, constructing, and expressing an understanding of the world around them.

In this State Literacy Plan the application of literacy competencies includes and extends beyond text to visual, audio and technological sources of information.

Belief Statements:

1. The foundation for lifelong literacy skills begins in infancy.
2. Literacy is the most important skill learners acquire that will benefit them throughout life.
3. A student's rate of growth is related to the quality of instruction and support students experience.
4. Establishing a collaborative system among education and health professionals, family, and community is essential to improved student literacy achievement.
5. An integrated system of delivery of instruction provides for high-quality learning experiences based on Arizona's Standards for all learners (Infants/Toddlers, pre-school, K-12 students, English Language Learners, and Special Education students).
6. Intervention that is matched to learners' academic, social-emotional and behavioral needs is essential.
7. Continuous collection and use of valid and reliable benchmark, progress-monitoring, and diagnostic literacy data informs and promotes decision making.
8. Purposeful, direct, explicit and systematic instruction and evidence based effective practices across the curriculum will support all learners in experiencing academic growth.
9. Student learning and motivation are enhanced by a connection to cultural experience and personal relevance.
10. Literacy instruction is supported by informed leadership consisting of parents, caregivers, community members, teachers, principals and district and state leaders.

"The most expensive burden we place on society is those students we have failed to teach to read well. The silent army of low readers who move through our schools,

siphoning off the lion's share of administrative resources, emerge into society as adults lacking the single prerequisite for managing their lives and acquiring additional training. They are chronically unemployed, underemployed, or unemployable. They form the single largest identifiable group of those whom we incarcerate, and to whom we provide assistance, housing, medical care, and other social services. They perpetuate and enlarge the problem by creating another generation of poor readers." (Fielding, L., Kerr, N., & Rosier, P. 1998, p. 6-7).

Language and Literacy Development

Arizona is committed to closing the gap between what we know from research to be best practice and what we do in our classrooms as it relates to literacy instruction. We believe to be effective, teachers of reading must know how language develops, how the English language is organized, how reading is acquired, and we must understand the reciprocal relationship between reading and writing and how to develop academic language, the language of instruction and text. Effective teachers also must know how to implement a comprehensive literacy program, know why some students struggle in learning to read, how to identify the students who are at risk for learning to read, know how to prevent reading failure, and know how to intervene effectively. The role of leadership is critical. "Effective school leadership is essential to the impact classroom and teacher practices have on student reading achievement. While teacher effectiveness is absolutely necessary, it is not sufficient for sustained improvement in reading proficiency. In fact, without leadership to establish the implementation and professional development, conditions under which optimal reading instruction takes place, the impact of effective teachers, evidence-based instructional programs, and robust data systems will be compromised." Lyon & Weiser (in press). Evidence-based Leadership. Impact on Student Learning and Achievement Across the Content Areas. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes. Older struggling students present an additional challenge and effective leadership and teachers must know how to support students' understanding of the complex text they encounter in grade level content reading. Teachers must know how language, writing and reading are intertwined and how to make this transparent to their students.

The following serves to develop a common understanding regarding the development of language and the acquisition of literacy. This lays the foundation for the Arizona Literacy Plan.

The convergence of research evidence over the last 30 years serves to shape our understanding of language acquisition and provides direction in framing the most effective instructional support systems from the earliest stages of literacy development to the advanced levels necessary for college and career readiness. This document outlines many factors influencing the **acquisition** of literacy skills across the stages and phases of development and guides teachers and practitioners in the use of effective instructional practices, matching what we do to what the student or child is telling us they need. Detailed information on assessment, use of data, instructional components and strategies, along with information for intervention and teaching at-risk learners, can be found in this document. The Arizona Literacy Plan is intended to be a living document, responsive to the latest research and evidence based findings so as to provide all stakeholders with a meaningful plan of action to meet our state's goal: highly literate 12th grade graduates.

"Literacy is an achievement that rests on all levels of linguistic processing, from the elemental sounds to the most overarching structures of text." (Moats, L. 2001, p. 1)

The Arizona Literacy plan recognizes that learning starts at birth and that the child's oral language proficiencies lay the foundation for further literacy development. A child's language develops naturally through his or her interaction with others. Numerous factors influence our language facility, including our unique neurological make up and the social environment in which we interact. Research studies have examined and analyzed language development and the environment of young children to inform our understanding of the necessary and optimal conditions for language learning to occur. From the earliest coos and babblings of an infant, to the one word and two word stages of toddlers, to the sentence levels, language builds upon language. Ample and rich interactive language experiences impact the language and vocabulary development of a child, and has far reaching consequences. The research of Hart and Risley (1995) provides strong evidence of this in their studies of vocabulary development found in their book entitled Meaningful Differences in the Everyday Experiences of Young Children in America. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes. The Birth through age 5 section of the Arizona State Literacy Plan outlines some of the developmental milestones of this age span and the necessary conditions for learning and instruction. This important period of development cannot be over emphasized, as it is critical for further cognitive development and learning. It is during this brief period of time that language learning lays the foundation for literacy acquisition.

The richer the vocabulary, background knowledge and linguistic skills a student brings to the literacy experience, the better prepared he or she will be to not only learn to read but also to learn from the text they hear during read-alouds or learn from what they read as they decode. Distinguishing and manipulating sounds, forming meaningful words, arranging thoughts within the confines of grammar and structure, and using language to express thoughts and interact with others all have a significant relationship to understanding the printed word and our written language system. As stated in the 2010 Arizona English Language Arts Standards, "Children's oral language competence is strongly predictive of their facility in learning to read and write: listening and speaking vocabulary and even mastery of syntax set boundaries as to what children can read and understand no matter how well they can decode." (2010 Arizona English Language Arts Standards, Appendix A, p. 27)

"What children bring to the printed page, or to the tasks of reading and writing, is knowledge of spoken language." (Moats, L. 2001, p. 2)

Students throughout the pre-K to 5th grade span must be immersed in purposeful, engaging oral language instruction that provides plenty of opportunity to develop their listening and speaking skills. This continues to be essential foundational learning for the necessary mastery of written language.

	Receptive Language	**Expressive Language**
Oral Language	Listening	Speaking
Written Language	Reading Decoding and Comprehension	Writing Handwriting, Spelling, Written Composition

Receptive language is language that is heard, processed and understood. **Expressive** language is language that is generated and produced by an individual. In general, receptive abilities develop first and as we become familiar with the pronunciation and meaning of a word, our ability to use it purposefully improves.

During the early instructional years, a student's listening comprehension develops through structured and intentional discussions and instruction that has rich vocabulary, language and writing opportunities. The instructional components of listening and speaking are critical to literacy development because these experiences provide a familiarity with different types of text structures and provide a solid foundation for comprehending text they will read. With exposure to rich literature, informational, complex text and sophisticated vocabulary, students are hearing and acquiring language. The Arizona 2010 English Language Arts Standards require opportunities for classroom interactions and discussions which are well designed in order to develop language. Experiencing opportunities for verbal reasoning and expression through discussions, questioning, and structured writing all contribute to this language knowledge. Through thoughtful lesson planning and learning experiences, students have opportunities to speak in complex ways about what they are learning. They can use complex oral and written sentence structures, answer higher level questions, and write expressively in response to these experiences and others, continuing to lay a foundation for higher level reading and writing skills. Students rely heavily on their background knowledge, vocabulary and oral language, both for what they bring to the classroom and what the teacher intentionally builds, to make sense of text as they hear it or read it.

Older students continue to develop more sophisticated language skills and in turn apply what they know about language to the cognitive demands of reading and writing more complex text.

In the later elementary years, (2010 Arizona English Language Arts Standards Speaking and Listening) building on previous language skills, students in grades 4 and 5 are expected to engage effectively in collaborative discussions, build on others' ideas and express their own ideas clearly. They are expected to elaborate on the remarks of others, draw conclusions, summarize and explain how each claim is supported by reasons and evidence. These tasks illustrate the increasingly complex demands of oral language which are building over the course of the elementary career.

Middle and High School (2010 Arizona English Language Arts Standards) students continue to practice and develop their oral language skills through purposeful and extended academic discussions, expressing their ideas clearly and persuasively around common text, subject and collaboration with peers, building their Vocabulary/Knowledge and becoming "competent, independent word learners." (Graves, M. F. 2006, p. 91) Vocabulary development continues to be addressed at these levels through direct teaching, indirect teaching and through developing word consciousness so students will learn new vocabulary independently.

"Whether the task is comprehending a challenging text, composing an essay for a state writing assessment, or participating in a class wide discussion on any given topic, students require proficiency in oral academic language. Oral language proficiency is a multidimensional construct that includes various aspects of vocabulary knowledge, grammar, and listening comprehension.

There is a well demonstrated relationship between oral language skills, particularly vocabulary, and reading comprehension among both native English speakers (e.g., Freebody and Anderson,1983) and English language learners (see Geva, 2006 for a review)." Torgesen, J. K., Houston, D. D., Rissman, L. M., Decker, S. M., Roberts, G., Vaughn, S., Wexler, J. Francis, D. J, Rivera, M. O., Lesaux, N. (2007), p. 95.

"Teachers need the concepts and technical language that illuminate the interplay between spoken and written language and, more importantly, between natural and academic language." (Henry, M. 2008)

This academic language, or the more formal language of text and instruction, begins early and continues throughout a student's school career. Teachers who are cognizant of the differences between conversational and academic language prepare students to be successful by making the two transparent and by using academic language effectively in instruction while requiring students to practice in kind. Our literacy plan calls for academic language and discourse to become a part of the students' repertoire, preparing them for the increasing demands of content literacy, increasing text complexity, school, and workplace communication and language demands of the 21st century.

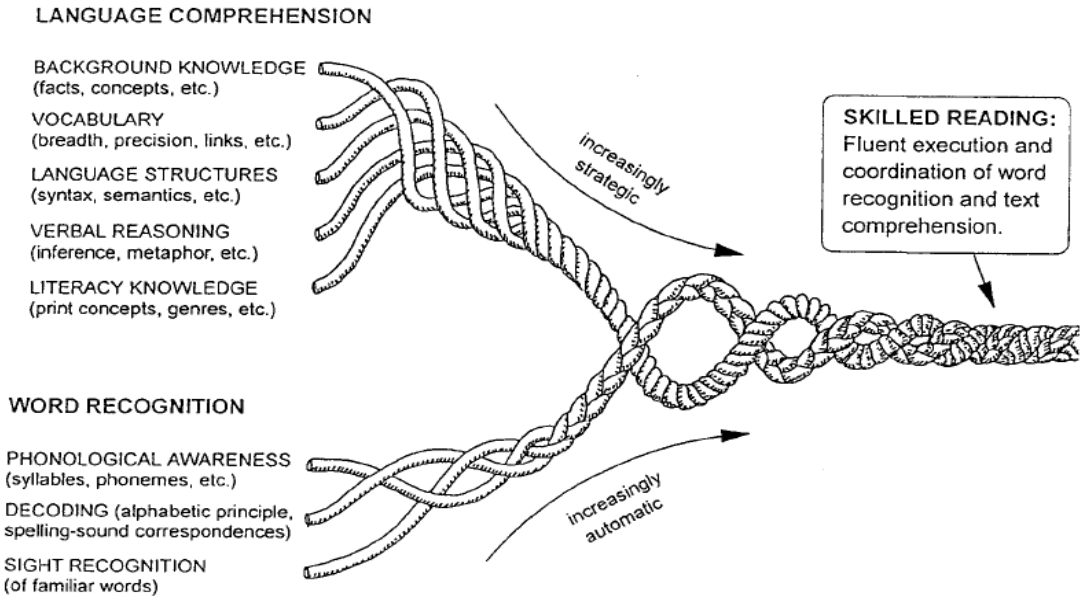
E. D. Hirsch discusses the importance of knowledge when he states, "Specific, subject-matter knowledge over a broad range of domains is the key to language comprehension--and as a result, to a broad ability to learn new things, [which is]... the cornerstone of competence and adaptability in the modern world." (American Educator, Winter, 2009-2010, p. 8). The level of language and knowledge a student brings to the literacy learning environment impacts literacy in profound ways. Background knowledge, and depth and breadth of vocabulary increasingly impact comprehension. As the differences between natural and academic language grow, students experience increasingly complex and different language structures across all content areas. At the earliest grade levels, teachers need to intentionally build deep vocabulary and concept knowledge enabling students to effectively use academic language to make connections and inferences both orally and in writing.

Student comprehension of advancing text complexity includes the challenge of embedded linguistic structures. The vocabulary and linguistic structures of oral language and communication are quite different from what we see in text and hear in formal discussion about text and learning.

From a recent webinar by the Center on Instruction, Barbara Foorman, Director, shared how breakdowns in reading comprehension can occur. Foorman cited syntax, vocabulary and decontexualization as factors that may jeopardize the integration of information across pages of text. Dr. Foorman stressed that **academic language** can impact comprehension for all students even those who do not struggle with oral language. The problem is compounded for those students who aren't familiar with specific vocabulary or terms used in text and/or the language of instruction encountered daily in the classroom.

The work of Hollis Scarborough (2001) deepens our understanding of the complexities involved in learning to read. His research assists in the understanding that language has multiple and simultaneous processes which are developing gradually over years of instruction and practice. Effective readers use these components concurrently to rapidly and automatically recognize the

alphabetic code to comprehend the text they are reading. The illustration below depicts and 'pulls apart' the component pieces and emphasizes where possible breakdowns in the process may occur. This enables teachers and interventionists to effectively determine areas of need for struggling readers. When any single element is deficient, a breakdown in comprehension can occur.



Scarborough, H.S. (2001). Connecting early language and literacy to later reading (dis)abilities: Evidence, theory, and practice. In S. B. Neuman & D. K. Dickinson (Eds.), Handbook of early literacy research, vol. 1 (pp. 97-110). New York: Guilford.

Language Comprehension

Background knowledge, vocabulary, language structures, verbal reasoning and literacy knowledge are all critical pieces in the development of comprehension skills and have implications for instruction. Based on research and illustrated within Scarborough's rope model (Scarborough, 2001 p. 98), comprehension is multifaceted. Life experiences (knowledge of the world), language experiences (events, activities and meaningful conversation), mental models (visual images, metacognitive recall of relevant knowledge) culture, family values, and geographical location all contribute to the *background knowledge* that a reader brings to the text. The more a student knows about the topics they are reading, the more the student will learn *through* reading. One has to know something to learn something. "Many of the cognitive skills we want our students to develop — especially reading with understanding and successfully analyzing problems — are intimately intertwined with knowledge of content. Background knowledge is absolutely integral to effectively deploying important cognitive processes." Daniel Willingham, *Knowledge in the Classroom* (2006).

The depth and breadth of an individual's *vocabulary* (oral and print, listening and speaking, reading and writing, and receptive and expressive) and word knowledge impacts their understanding or comprehension. There are multiple ways to know a word and this has implications for instruction. How a word is pronounced, spelled, the part of speech it plays, its morphological features, whether it is informal or academic language, its synonyms and antonyms, related concepts, and the multiple meanings of the word are just a few of the ways to

know a word (Nation,1990; Nagy & Scott, 2000; Beck, McKeown & Kucan, 2002). For our youngest (pre K and younger children) it is through extended, responsive conversations *and* wide reading for different purposes that they acquire most of the *new* vocabulary they learn. For school age students, however, word learning is both intentional as well as incidental. Because vocabulary instruction is so important for comprehension, experts in reading recommend some form of vocabulary instruction. According to M. Graves (2000), there are four components of an effective vocabulary program:

(1) wide or extensive reading (listening or independent),
(2) instruction in specific words to enhance comprehension of text,
(3) instruction in independent word-learning strategies, and
(4) word consciousness and word-play activities

In addition to vocabulary knowledge, the knowledge of *language structure* impacts comprehension as the text itself increases in complexity. Helping students understand meaning at the phrase and sentence levels, idiomatic expressions and how to construct and deconstruct more complicated (compound/complex) sentences is critical for comprehension for all students including English language learners. Students need to learn meaning across sentences (example: understanding referents) and across paragraphs and texts. Explicitly teaching text structure supports student understanding of text demands. Reading (decoding) and writing (encoding) are mutually supportive and instruction with grammar, syntax and semantics should be embedded during both reading and writing. Sentence combining is one way to increase students' development of both oral and written language. Attention to the linguistic structures of language in instruction will help demystify the complexity of text and help students see meaningful connections which will support their understanding.

Teachers must also explicitly explain the difference between surface level meaning and the deeper intended meaning of the author. In order to comprehend as we read, we use the language skills of *verbal reasoning*, analyzing and synthesizing information we read, using inference skills and connecting ideas across paragraphs, across texts with the knowledge we bring to the text we are reading. A student in 7th grade will be expected to 'trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claim,' according to the 2010 Arizona English Language Arts Standards.

Literacy knowledge includes knowledge of print concepts, simple to complex. Beginning at letter recognition and moving to the more complex print concept of discourse structure and all those in between; students need to understand that in English we read from left to right and that literary texts and informational texts are organized differently. Knowledge about text structure and genre develop early and continue to develop over time through explicit instruction and learning experiences with wide a variety of texts. It is particularly important that content teachers understand and teach the discipline specific literacy skills for thinking, reading and responding (verbally and in writing) in their subject areas.

The more experienced/skilled reader who reads and comprehends text uses written language to learn and build new knowledge, uses language to learn about language and learning. The 2010 Arizona English Language Arts Standards call for students to "read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when

writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text." As stated in the writing standards, "Each year in their writing, students should demonstrate increasing sophistication in all aspects of language use, from vocabulary and syntax to the development and organization of ideas, and they should address increasingly demanding content and sources." More detailed information on instructional components and strategies for reading and writing are found in the grade level strands of this Arizona State Literacy Plan and in the 2010 Arizona English Language Arts Standards.

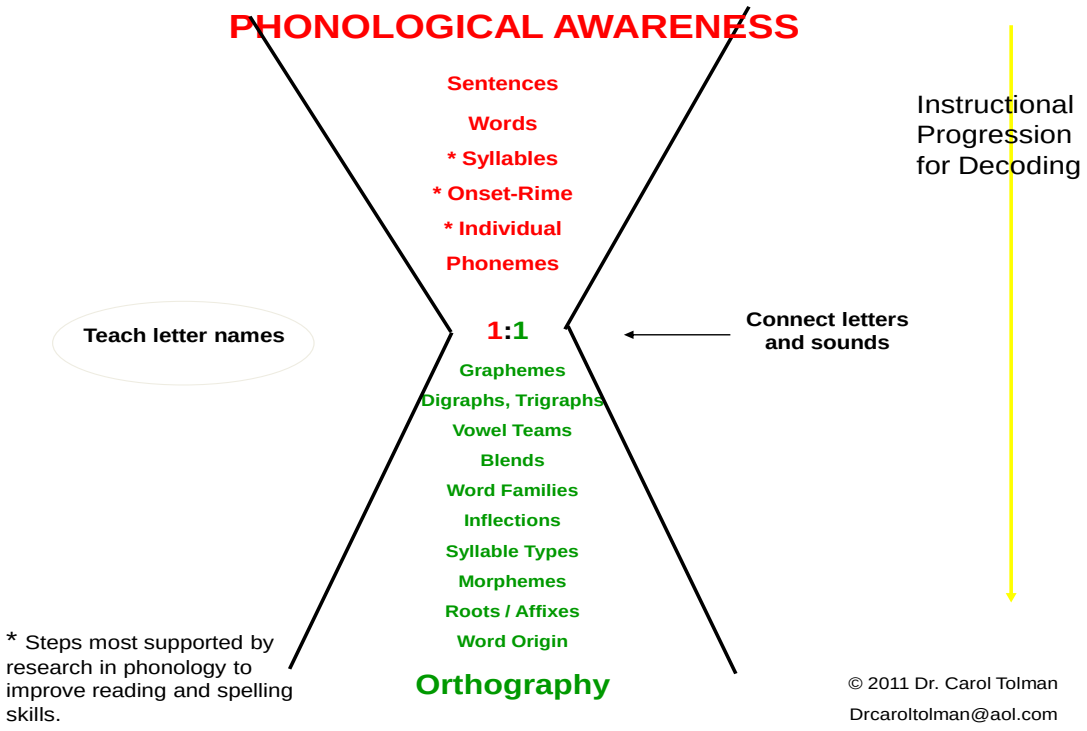
The process of finding and making meaning must be made transparent with think-alouds to students to ensure they develop the skills and strategies necessary to read and comprehend (increasingly sophisticated text) automatically, strategically, and independently. Students learn to use comprehension strategies to understand what they are reading, and monitor their thinking about their thinking as they are reading (metacognition). Through monitoring of their understanding as they read, students ask themselves if it makes sense, then reread for clarification when they realize they don't understand, connect what they read to what they already know, and develop an awareness of knowing what it is they don't know. Helping students learn to monitor and *reflect on their comprehension* as they are reading is critical in their development of literacy.

"Learning to read is a complex task that requires teaching different reading skills in an integrated fashion. While the development of phonemic awareness and decoding skills are essential for proficient reading, they, in and of themselves, are not sufficient for reading comprehension. Understanding what is read requires the ability to read text accurately and fluently, knowledge of vocabulary relevant to what is read, and the ability to employ multiple cognitive strategies to reinforce understanding." Reid Lyon, (personal communication May 13, 2011)

While students are steadily developing deep vocabulary knowledge, knowledge of increasingly complex language structures, listening comprehension skills, and critical thinking and reasoning skills, automaticity and fluency in reading words, phrases, sentences and passages must also continue to be developed.

Word Recognition

While a child who comes to school with an enriched oral language foundation and is ready to learn to read and write, they may not understand the alphabetic principal, that the alphabet letter or combination of letters (grapheme) are used to represent segmented speech sounds (phoneme) in our English language. Gaining an understanding of both the phonological awareness and orthography is critical for early reading success.



The Progression of Mapping Speech to Print Used with permission by Dr. Carol Tolman

Phonological awareness contributes to our ability to recognize words, hear discrete differences between words; (specific/pacific), spell words and develop vocabulary. Research has shown that most students who struggle with learning to read have difficulty with phonological skill development. (Shankweiler, D., Crain, S., Katz,L., Fowler, A. M., Liberman, A. M. Brady, S. A., 1995). Some of the skills developed through phonological awareness include the ability to hear/discriminate the larger chunks of sound in a word (syllables and rhyme) and the ability to discern the smallest units of sound in a word, the phonemes. While students are developing their phonological and phonemic awareness skills, they identify and manipulate

spoken language and use this knowledge of the sounds to decode the written language (alphabetic principal).

As students develop **decoding skills** (applying the alphabetic principle to read and spell) they are learning to unlock the orthographic system; the written system of English language. Beginning readers and spellers need to learn the relationship between the 40+ speech sounds (phonemes) and the more than 100 spellings (graphemes) used to represent them. They need phonics instruction that teaches skills for quick, automatic word reading (high frequency words and irregular words), explicit and systematic phonics instruction that shows the relationship between letters and sounds, written words with letter patterns; along with dictating and spelling of words, phrases and sentences. Reaching the level of automaticity is critical (Morris et al. 1998; NICHD, 2000; Stahl, 2004; Wolf, M. et al., 2003) and these skills must be mastered. Information on the sequence of skill development of phonological and phonemic awareness, alphabetic principle, orthographic knowledge, high frequency word reading, reading comprehension strategies, benchmarks for fluency, and instructional strategies can be found in

the age and grade spans of this State Literacy Plan and in the Foundations section of the 2010 Arizona English Language Arts Standards.

As students progress through the grades, they learn about increasingly complex structures of words. Orthographic knowledge of syllable types (spelling patterns), morphological knowledge or knowledge of meaningful word parts (prefixes, suffixes and roots), and word origin (Latin, Greek) all support the students in comprehending, learn vocabulary and spelling or writing. The fluent student is using their decoding skills for increasingly complex words and text, recognizing words and reading at a more automatic level *(sight recognition),* 'freeing up their cognitive desk space' to concentrate on meaning as they read through the text.

Students who possess foundational language skills have the keys to unlock the challenges of twenty first century literacy. Therefore; teachers must possess the knowledge from research to instruct with the rigor and relevance that is required by the new Arizona English Language Arts Standards for college and career readiness.

Age and Grade Span

Birth to age 5

The Arizona Literacy Plan has been developed to provide a framework for the planning of quality literacy experiences for all children birth to age five, regardless of the environment where a child spends their first years of life. Arizona's youngest children are developing early literacy skill at home with families, in licensed early care and education facilities, with family child care providers, in libraries, museums and other areas of the community. The recommendations outlined in this plan cover a broad range of skill development and provide useful strategies for all children from diverse backgrounds and diverse abilities. This framework is intended for use by all who touch the lives of young children in urban, suburban, rural, and tribal communities.

The portion of the Arizona Literacy Plan that focuses on birth through five years of age is based on the findings from *Developing early literacy: Report of the national early literacy panel* (NELP, 2008), the guidance from the National Association for the Education of Young Children, evidenced-based research reflected in the Arizona Early Learning Standards (2005) and the *Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework* (2011). The National Early Learning Panel was convened to address the literacy gap discussed in the *Report of the National Reading Panel: Teaching Children to Read* (NICHD, 2000). This report illustrates how early instructional practices implemented by encouraging adults could better support emerging literacy skills of children from birth to age five. In order to eliminate learning gaps, adults must understand child development and strategies to encourage optimal growth. The Arizona Literacy Plan intends to eliminate this gap and establish a trajectory of literacy success for *all* children beginning at birth.

Young children need many opportunities and thoughtfully orchestrated experiences to practice their escalating language skills in all areas: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This is best achieved by capitalizing on a child's natural approaches to learning such as initiative and curiosity, persistence and attentiveness, creativity, confidence and problem solving. The most effective instructional strategy for young children is play. All areas of development and literacy can be supported through varied, engaging, and active play.

As children get closer to formalized school experience there is a shift towards more intentional instruction that will lead to school readiness. Although not all of Arizona's children attend early care and education programs, for those that do, a high quality early education program recognizes and understands how children's goals for learning are framed within the context of learning standards and aligns planning of activities and design of environment to stimulate children's learning across content and domain areas (social-emotional, language and literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, physical development and health and fine arts). Literacy development in the early years, such as listening and speaking, lays the foundation for later success in reading and writing.

Young Infants (Birth - 8 months): Babies use sounds, facial expressions and movements to communicate their needs and feelings. They develop different types of cries to express different needs (Wolfe & Nevills, 2004). They show particular interest in the people around them. They like to look, listen and follow the mother's or father's voice. They look intently at light and dark contours of their environment. Around the first two months of life, infants mature enough to begin cooing, then babbling, then later making sounds that imitate the tones and rhythms of adult talk. During this stage, babies begin to participate in 'conversation turn-taking' i.e. the child vocalizes as the adult listens and in turn the adult responds back to the child using facial expressions, replicating the sounds of the child, or other babbling sounds.

A critical part of infant development is the creation of connections in the brain. Connections are made when a child has interactions and experiences with adults in a caring environment. When an infant has expressed needs, then an adult must meet their needs in order for optimal development to occur. Although some brain development occurs naturally; stimulation, nurturing, and strong relationships must be present.

Language and literacy development begins for a child during these first months of life by listening to the sounds of words being spoken by the adults around them. Oral language development is a foundation for reading, writing, and spelling. According to the National Institute for Literacy, oral language is the "engine of learning and thinking" (*Learning to Talk and Listen*, NIL, 2009). "Long before infants can focus their eyes on the pictures, turn the pages, and understand the words you are saying they can begin to associate books with the pleasant feelings they have when you hold them on your lap and share a book" (Dodge, Rudick, & Berke, 2006).

Strategies: According to *ZERO TO THREE: National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Families* (2011), adults foster the social relationship and communication development through their continuous interactions with infants and toddlers in a safe, caring environment. While the children may not understand initially, they are developing the brain structures necessary for later language literacy. For young babies, hearing language means learning language.

Strategies for adults to use:

- Hug, cuddle, hum, sing and kiss your baby
- Talk to your child in a soothing voice
- Respond to an infant naturally, authentically and immediately. (You will not spoil your child by responding to their needs)
- Utilize those times when the baby is naturally awake and alert to directly engage the baby through talking, singing or reading
- Model and label objects and actions repeatedly. Example: The adult taps their nose and says "nose". Then touches the child's nose and says "nose".
- Encourage infants to focus and attend to objects
- Talk through the day. Describe what is happening to the child, around the child, and any other stories you create, for example: "You have a wet diaper, let's go and change it. Oh, look at the dog in the park!"
- Have a variety of mirrors, fabric scraps, objects and print placed in the line of sight to encourage curiosity and exploration
- Include washable, sturdy, chewable books made of cloth, plastic or vinyl. Books should have highly contrasting pictures, simple illustrations and photos with one or two objects per page and things to feel and move

Older Infants (6 months to 18 months): The mobile baby learns about their world through exploration of their environment and interactions with adults. The brain continues periods of rapid growth during this stage of life. Mobile infants imitate expressions, sounds and words. They mimic what they see and experience such as holding a comb to a doll's head after they had their hair combed.

During this period of development, infants create mental images of how things work and the sequences of adult behaviors. It is during this time that infants move from using gestures and vocalizations to using deliberate actions to convey meaning. They are both practicing independence and exploring ways to stay connected to those they love and trust. Eye contact, vocalizing and gestures take on added importance as tools for maintaining connection. They begin to understand the meaning of words in their environment (et al., hot, no, dad, mommy, bath, book).

According to the NELP (2008), oral language development includes skills that help children to communicate and to understand the meaning of words and concepts that they hear or read. Children obtain new information about things they want to learn about and express their own ideas and thoughts using specific language.

A significant focus throughout the Arizona Literacy Plan is the importance of developing oral language skills (receptive and expressive language -including vocabulary). *Receptive language* is the ability to understand what is spoken while E*xpressive language* is the ability to use word approximations, words and gestures to convey meaning. According to *The Program for Infant Toddler Care* (PITC) (2001), infants have a receptive vocabulary of 60 to 150 words. At 18 months a child will typically have about a 25 spoken word vocabulary. As children progress through this developmental phase, it is expected that children will begin to string multiple words together. Example: child may say "go bye-bye" or "all gone".

During this stage of growth, the beginning of writing development is occurring in tandem with language development. (Please see appendix for writing stages). Even the youngest child can develop writing skills. For these young children, this includes the physical development of their motor skills. Children should have opportunities to handle writing instruments such as crayons, washable markers and should have access to large pieces of paper on which to experiment with paint and other media.

Strategies for adults to use:

- Provide language modeling and encouragement to mobile infants by making eye contact while talking and gesturing
- Encourage or model finger pointing to objects and labeling. Example: when a child looks at a spoon, the adult response by picking up the spoon and saying "This is a spoon. I use it to cook with"
- Expand, repeat, label and use words from the infant's primary language. Example: the child approximates the word "gog". Adult response is "oh, you are right. That is a dog. It has a lot of soft fur"
- Provide an environment that offers a variety of different smells, textures and visuals to help to promote curiosity
- Make language a part of play time. Example peek-a-boo
- Have a variety of board books, objects and print available for children to touch and explore
- Provide large pieces of paper, jumbo crayons, large pieces of chalk, play dough and finger-paints
- Use large paint brushes to paint with water

Toddlers (15 months- 36 months): Toddlers are egocentric and frequently test barriers. They are learning how to be safe, how to use peers and adults as resources, they are learning the speech sounds of new words, how to use words and how to act appropriately in different situations. Adults must intentionally assist toddlers in becoming aware of print and how a book is read. Adults must also foster a joy of reading. Adults should expect to reread a favorite story multiple times. After numerous readings of a story, children may spontaneously imitate book reading.

The toddler years are a window of opportunity for language and vocabulary development. The toddler's receptive vocabulary grows even more rapidly. They continue to combine words into phrases and sentences (Hart & Risley, 2003). During this time of development, vocabulary rapidly increases from around 25 words at 18 months to approximately 900 words by the time a child is three years old (PITC, 2001). During this stage toddlers can follow 2-3 phrase commands, imitate the actions of adults and playmates and articulate a wide range of emotions although they may not have the vocabulary to verbally express themselves.

Children should continue to have opportunities to handle writing instruments such as crayons, pencils, washable markers and should have access to large pieces of paper to experiment with paint and other media. Adults must continue to support writing development for this age group by providing intentional opportunities and encouraging the physical development.

Strategies for adults to use:

- Continue to reinforce the toddler's language practice by labeling or naming objects and feelings and describing events to help children learn new words
- Continue to expand and extend the toddler's language by utilizing increasingly complex sentence structure and vocabulary
- Set up a special time to read and interact with books together
- Employ *Parallel Talk* where the adult describes what the child is doing. "The most important aspect of talk is its ***amount***. Adults who just talk as they go about their daily activities expose their children to 1,000 to 2,000 words every hour. (Hart & Risley, 2003)
- Model reading stories and use of manipulatives to support comprehension. ~~For~~ Example: using puppets and props while you read a story or retell a story
- Intentionally explain book handling skills such as turning pages, directionality and following along with the words
- Include wait time for child to respond to the adult communication
- Interact with the child using finger-play activities, rhymes and songs
- Develop background knowledge as well as vocabulary through enriching experiences such as libraries, museums, zoos, bookstores, and community activities
- Provide toddlers with opportunities to practice their language skills through play
- Provide opportunity for imitative play such as playing *Follow the Leader* where the child is the leader
- Provide enriching and sustained opportunity for Dramatic Play (make-believe and fantasy play)
- Have a variety of board books, picture books, magazines and print available for children to touch and explore. Books should have simple plots and few words. Suggested book themes include: families and feelings, animals, and everyday experiences. Books should have pictures that introduce basic concepts
- Provide large pieces of paper, large crayons, washable markers, play dough, and finger-paints
- Model authentic writing samples such as lists and notes, taking dictation for a child's picture or experience
- Point out environmental print. Example: when driving by a stop sign an adult says "Oh, I have to stop because there is a stop sign"

Preschooler (3 years – 5 years): The preschoolers' increased language capacity enhances their ability to think, reason and problem-solve which are critical to code focused instruction as

well as literacy comprehension. According to NELP (2008), the six crucial literacy skills that will prepare children for later reading are:

1. **Alphabet knowledge (AK)**: knowledge of the names and sounds associated with printed letters
2. **Phonological awareness (PA)**: the ability to detect, manipulate, or analyze the auditory aspects of spoken language (including the ability to distinguish or segment words, syllables, or phonemes), independent of meaning
3. **Rapid automatic naming (RAN) of letters or digits**: the ability to rapidly name a sequence of random letters or digits
4. **RAN of objects or colors**: the ability to rapidly name a sequence of repeating random sets of pictures of objects (e.g., "car," "tree," "house," "man") or colors
5. **Writing or writing name**: the ability to write letters in isolation on request or to write one's own name
6. **Phonological memory**: the ability to remember spoken information for a short period of time.

Additional early literacy skills are:

1. **Concepts about print**: knowledge of print conventions (e.g., left-right, front-back) and concepts (book cover, author, text)
2. **Print knowledge**: a combination of elements of AK, concepts about print, and early decoding
3. **Reading readiness**: usually a combination of AK, concepts of print, vocabulary, memory, and PA
4. **Oral language**: the ability to produce or comprehend spoken language, including vocabulary and grammar
5. **Visual processing**: the ability to match or discriminate visually presented symbols.

As children become preschoolers, there is a refining of their motor development. Some still need gross motor skills practice, but many children are gaining the control of their fine motor skills that allows them to scribble, approximate letters, and write their name. (Please see the writing stages in the Appendix). Children should have increasing opportunities to handle writing instruments such as crayons, pencils, washable markers and should have access to varying types and sizes of unlined paper on which to write. Again, as children move closer to formalized education, they must have intentional writing experiences. Instructional strategies that support writing development should include adult dictation, modeled writing, shared writing, interactive writing, and independent writing.

Strategies for adults to use:

- Scaffold the child's ability to articulate their needs, feelings, or wishes by providing phrases, explanations or examples.
- Scaffold Dramatic Play (make-believe) to strengthen a child's memory, logical reasoning, imagination, creativity and background knowledge.
- Play listening games to build auditory discrimination skills.
- Incorporate experiences to enhance children's ability to actively listen, observe and inquire, for example: children listening to a peer describe an event and then asking questions for clarification or responding with their own ideas.
- Model a range of strategies for communication such as asking questions, making suggestions, or providing opportunities for children to collaborate with peers.

- Use a variety of methods to represent their experiences (e.g. dictating, writing, drawing, clay models).
- Use environmental print by pointing out print in familiar objects in the environment (e.g. Toys R Us, Target, Cheerios, Leap Frog, Stop signs or street signs).
- Provide a literacy-rich environment using picture books, charts, magazines, newspapers, and children's names in print.
- Create an interactive and engaging word wall.
- Read every day using a variety of books (fiction, non-fiction) with increasing text complexity in various settings (whole group, guided reading, listening stations) to model different purposes for reading.
- Point to printed words while you read aloud focusing on particular letter names and letter-sound combinations, recognizing that words are meaningful to them.
- Reflect the diversity of their population. Books and pictures should include people of different races, age, gender and abilities in various roles.
- Ask open-ended questions that will yield a child's expanded response. Example: "What was your favorite part of the story?" "Tell me about your picture".
- Use singing, rhyming, and alliteration games, activities and opportunities.
- Encourage and validate approximations of writing.
- Provide varied and meaningful uses of print and opportunities to write. Example: opportunity to write their own name.
- Intentionally support alphabet knowledge in authentic ways. Letters have names and sounds and symbols. Example: using letter name knowledge during transitions- Adult holds up a letter B and says "everyone whose name starts with /b/ wash their hands".
- Utilize extended responsive conversations and books with increasing complexity to expand vocabulary acquisition including tiered words and academic vocabulary.

Grades K through 5

Introduction

The elements of the Arizona Literacy Plan highlight the parameters for a consistent, common understanding and language with which to address literacy challenges. This foundation focuses on instruction and supports throughout all content areas. The elements include:

- The integration of the five components of reading in all content areas (science, social studies, music, art, physical education, technology) including spelling, writing, speaking and listening. (Arizona English Language Arts Standards, 2010)

- Early learning experiences that support literacy development in young children.

- Research-based instructional approaches fostering communication skills, including oral and written language.

- Access to curriculum, opportunity and academic achievement.

In 1997, at the request of the U.S. Congress, the National Reading Panel, through the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), was assembled to assess the effectiveness of differentiated approaches for instructing reading. The panel's report titled "Teaching Children to Read," (2000), identified five essential components of reading instruction, validated by research. (McCardle & Chhabra, 2004; August & Shanahan, 2008; Honig, Diamond, & Gutlohn, 2008). "Research shares that students show the most gains in letter knowledge, phonological awareness, alphabetic principle (phonics), and reading success when skills are taught in an integrated program containing all components." (Foorman, Chen, Carlson, Moats, Francis, & Fletcher, 2003; WWC, 2006b) The components are: Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Reading Fluency, Vocabulary, and Reading Comprehension.

Instructional Components

Phonemic Awareness: The ability to hear, identify and manipulate the individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words. Phonemic awareness is the understanding that words are made up of individual sounds.

Phonics: The understanding that there is a predictable relationship between phonemes, the sounds of the language, and graphemes, the letters and spellings that represent those sounds in written language.

Vocabulary: The development of stored information about the meanings and pronunciation of words necessary for communication including listening, speaking, reading and writing vocabulary.

Fluency: The ability to read text accurately, smoothly and quickly. It provides a bridge between word recognition and comprehension as readers recognize words and comprehend them at the same time.

Comprehension: The strategies readers use to understand, remember, and communicate with others about what has been read; they are active sets of steps readers use to make sense of text.

In addition to the five essential components of reading instruction, other elements critical to a comprehensive literacy program include **writing and oral language development.**

According to the 2010 Arizona English Language Arts Standards, "To build a foundation for college and career readiness, students need to learn to use writing as a way of offering and supporting opinions, demonstrating understanding of the subjects they are studying, and conveying real and imagined experiences and events. They learn to appreciate that a key purpose of writing is to communicate clearly to an external, sometimes unfamiliar audience, and they begin to adapt the form and content of their writing to accomplish a particular task and purpose. They develop the capacity to build knowledge on a subject through research projects and to respond analytically to literary and informational sources. To meet these goals, students must devote significant time and effort to writing, producing numerous pieces over short and extended time frames throughout the year."

The literacy-rich college and career ready classroom equipped with computers and a variety of other digital resources, requires a 21st century approach to literacy instruction.

The skills, processes and knowledge of reading and writing are interwoven (Fitzgerald and Shanahan, 2000). Reading exposes students to text organization and a wide range of vocabulary, which in turn is used in writing. A literacy-rich environment helps students create and understand the connection between reading, writing, speaking and listening.

Reading and writing have a direct connection that supports all students' ability to learn and achieve. Teachers recognize that student writing proficiency mirrors student reading proficiency in all content areas and in all grade levels. According to Salus and Flood (2003), as students interact with written and spoken languages, they begin to improve their vocabulary, decoding and encoding skills, and develop their reading comprehension and writing strategies.

Teaching spelling helps students make connections between letters and sounds, and makes it easier for them to remember words in text.(Ehri, 1987; Moats, 2005/2006). Instruction in spelling patterns and practice in writing can promote the development of both reading and writing (Adams, 2001). Spelling instruction promotes using letter sound knowledge, phonological awareness, knowledge of word parts, and spelling conventions (Report of the National Reading Panel, 2000, US Department of Health and Human Services). Using what they learn about sounds, letters, and spelling patterns, students strengthen their skills in reading and writing.

Spelling and reading are interconnected. Fluent reading is more accessible if you know the spellings of words since both require or rely upon a mental image of a word. (Snow, Griffin, & Burns, 2005). To build a foundation, students must gain control over many conventions of standard English grammar, usage, and mechanics as well as learn other ways to use language to convey meaning effectively. They must also be able to determine or clarify the meaning of grade appropriate academic words encountered through listening, reading, and media use;

come to appreciate that words have non-literal meanings, shades of meaning, and relationships to other words; and expand their vocabulary in the course of studying content. Therefore, to establish a strong link between reading and writing, children need opportunities to write for a variety of audiences and purposes integrated across the curriculum.
(Arizona 2010 English Language Arts Standards-ELAS)

Oral Language

Children's comprehension of written language depends in large part upon their effective use and understanding of oral language and using language to learn. First, language develops at the oral level, through listening and speaking. Children then move to acquisition of reading and writing at the text level. Language instruction that focuses on listening, speaking, and understanding includes the following: discussions on a variety of topics, songs, chants, and poems that are fun to sing and say, concept development and vocabulary-building lessons, games and activities that involve talking, listening, and following directions. (Texas Education Agency, 2000). “Using words expressively requires a deeper level of word knowledge… and the ability to use a word in speaking or writing demonstrates true ownership of the word” (Moats, 2009, p. 7) Academic achievement is greatly impacted by the student’s ability to communicate in both oral and written forms and students benefit from classroom experiences designed to explicitly develop their vocabulary and language skills. Students must have ample opportunities to take part in a variety of rich, structured academic conversations—as part of a whole class, in small groups and with a partner. Being productive members of these academic conversations requires that students contribute accurate, relevant information; respond to and develop what others have said; make comparisons and contrasts; and analyze and synthesize a multitude of ideas in various domains. New technologies have broadened and expanded the role that speaking and listening play in acquiring and sharing knowledge and have tightened their link to other forms of communication. (AZ 2010 ELAS)

Rigorous Instruction

Rigorous instruction is challenging and complex. Learning goals are relevant and differentiated for all students and rigor is foundational to the Arizona Literacy Plan and goals. Supported by our 2010 AZ ELAS, we expect our students to demonstrate depth of knowledge and content mastery, as well as critical thinking and applied skills. Rigor is expected from our students, ourselves, our colleagues, and our educational organizations at all levels throughout the state.

Text Complexity

The Reading standards place equal emphasis on the sophistication of what students read and the skill with which they read. Whatever they are reading, students must also show a steadily growing ability to discern more from and make fuller use of text, including making an increasing number of connections among ideas and between texts, considering a wider range of textual evidence, and becoming more sensitive to inconsistencies, ambiguities, and poor reasoning in

texts. This close reading of text is emphasized in the 2010 Arizona English Language Arts Standards, beginning with Standard 1.

The Standards acknowledge the fact that whereas some writing skills, such as the ability to plan, revise, edit, and publish, are applicable to many types of writing, other skills are more properly defined in terms of specific writing types: argument, informative/explanatory text, and narrative. The standards stress the importance of the writing-reading connection by requiring students to draw upon and write about evidence from literary and informational texts. Because of the centrality of writing to most forms of inquiry, research standards are prominently included are infused in student learning. (2010 Arizona English Language Arts Standards)

Classroom Organization and Management for Effective Instruction

In effective classrooms, the teacher has established a classroom management system to address student behavior, routines, and transitions. Teachers with effective classroom management demonstrate and use rules and procedures in the following:

- General expectations for behavior
- Beginning and ending the class day or period
- Transitions and interruptions
- Materials and equipment
- Group work
- Seat work and teacher-led activities

Marzano, (2003)

Motivation to Read and Relevance of Reading

Children develop the motivation to learn to read when reading is relevant to everyday life and enjoyable. Motivation is linked to achievement having a positive effect on both comprehension and vocabulary, and general success in school. (Miller & Meece,1999). When children experience early success in reading activities, they become motivated learners and avid independent readers of written material. Modeling, through oral and shared reading, can motivate students to want to read themselves. (Texas Education Agency, 2000).

An important aspect of reading motivation is acquired through books that are read aloud to students. Reading aloud provides opportunities to expose students to vocabulary, concepts, ideas, and text structures that are beyond their personal reading ability. Books that are read aloud demonstrate the relevance of reading. Arnold and Whitehurst (1994) stated, "…reading aloud to children has been found to facilitate the growth of vocabulary in preschool-age children and elementary-age students. Reading aloud has been shown to promote children's understanding of academic language of text, which differs significantly from oral language. This practice also introduces novel concepts of text structure and story grammar and provides an important avenue for learning about the world." (Arnold, David S., and Whitehurst, Grover J. 1994. "Accelerating Language Development through Picture Book Reading: A Summary of Dialogic Reading and Its Effects." In Bridges to Literacy: Children, Families, and Schools, ed. David K. Dickinson. Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell.)

The Skilled Kindergarten through Grade 5 Reader:

In order for students to be prepared for college and career, connections must be made from grade level to grade level as the demands of literacy increase. Students progress from an understanding and ability to automatically apply the alphabetic system of decoding and encoding text to the ability to fluently and accurately read and write with comprehension and meaning. Text endurance is crucial as text complexity intensifies. Increasing language development for both natural and academic language occurs throughout.

Kindergarten Transition

As children prepare to enter kindergarten, an intentional transition plan will help to ensure each child's success in the elementary grades.

Many students will enter kindergarten having had some type of preschool experience. Local Education Agencies must be deliberate in building relationships with programs such as Head Start, Faith Based Programs, and Private or Non-profit Child care centers in order to facilitate communication and support transitions. Preschool teachers hold vital information about students that will help kindergarten teachers know, understand and meet the individual needs of the new kindergarten student.

A successful kindergarten transition plan should include:

- The identification of committee team members and their affiliation and the designation of a leader and discuss transition goals
- The identification of current transition activities within the community and determine goals for improving these efforts
- The creation a set of activities to achieve the transition goals
- The development of time lines for implementation of transition plan.

There are five guiding principles that are identified core components of transition planning as identified Robert C. Pianta, Ph.D., Director of the Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) at the University of Virginia, and his team:

- Foster relationships as resources
- Promote continuity from preschool to kindergarten
- Focus on family strengths
- Adapt practices to meet individual needs
- Form collaborative relationships

The specific characteristics of language and literacy development in each elementary grade level are defined as follows. Stage/progressions are listed below.

Kindergarten

Through direct, explicit, and systematic instruction, kindergarten students learn to recognize, say, and write the alphabet, learn the sounds of the letters, hear the discreet sounds in words (phonemic awareness), connect letters and letter sounds (phonics), experiment with letters in spelling and writing (print concepts), and begin to use their phonemic awareness and phonics knowledge to blend, decode and read simple words. These students receive instruction and opportunities to build upon, strengthen, support and enrich the foundational literacy and linguistic skills that are learned from birth to 5 years of age. Additionally, kindergarteners begin to build their repertoire of high frequency words they can read (i.e. the, said). Students in kindergarten class play with words using rhyme. By the end of kindergarten they are able to identify initial, ending and medial phonemes (sounds) in a c-v-c word (Consonant-Vowel-Consonant word) and manipulate these sounds. Kindergarteners use picture clues or illustrations to help with story understanding. The comprehension and vocabulary of kindergartners is primarily built through oral language activities such as listening to books and stories read aloud using intentional storytelling techniques that include explicit and implicit vocabulary instruction, teacher modeling, and multi-sensory activities for retell. Students move from pretending to read, telling and often retelling a story, to reading simple decodable words and a few high frequency words.

Kindergarteners participate in collaborative conversations about kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults. By asking and answering questions, they confirm understanding of a text read aloud. With prompting and support, kindergarteners describe familiar people, places, things, events, and details. They speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly. (Arizona 2010 English Language Arts Standards for Speaking and Listening) Students in kindergarten learn about the basic parts of a book and that text is read and written from left to right. Students will master letter identification and will know 35 beginning, middle, and ending phonemic sounds and can automatically blend at least 15 nonsense words by the end of Kindergarten. Differentiated instruction across the curriculum (all content areas) is provided for students who excel as well as for students who are second language learners, special education (exceptional education) learners, and at-risk populations. In order to assure effective literacy instruction with an equal focus on language, reading, and writing, struggling students receive targeted, specific intervention instruction; and those who excel are provided with enrichment opportunities. Students will be provided with multiple opportunities and significant time to strengthen and adapt their writing to accomplish a particular task and purpose to produce numerous pieces over short and extended time frames throughout the year. (Arizona 2010 English Language Arts Standards for Writing)

In order to strengthen and enhance their writing skills, kindergarten students utilize a combination of drawing, dictating and writing to respond to reading, express opinions, retell events in sequence, and answer questions. They use inventive spelling based on their developing knowledge of letter sound correspondences and begin to spell simple decodable words and a few high frequency words. With the support of adults, kindergarten students use technology and digital tools to create and publish their writings. (Arizona 2010 English Language Arts Standards for Writing)

First Grade

These students continue to receive direct, explicit, and systematic instruction, and practice letter-sound relationships. They learn more about vowels and consonants, spelling patterns, and they increase their repertoire of high frequency and sight words. First grade students read simple stories that include simple phonetic patterns along with high frequency words. They continue to develop their vocabulary through listening comprehension and oral language activities that include teacher think aloud modeling, direct and explicit vocabulary instruction, use of realia or items in the environment, and listening to high quality literature read aloud. Phonemic awareness continues to develop. Phonics instruction includes syllable patterns of vowel team words, r controlled vowels, vowel-consonant-silent e words, consonant-le words, along with consonant blends and digraphs. First grade students are introduced to compound words along with beginning suffixes (-s, -ed, -ing, etc).

Students in first grade move back and forth between decoding a word (reading) to encoding (writing) to assist with spelling and writing, continuing to build the reading and writing connection. They read whole words, sentences, and short passages of decodable text which is used to build fluency.

With direct instruction and teacher modeling, the students move from retelling to a more in-depth understanding and knowledge of story parts (i.e. character, plot, main events), and summarization. The first grade student continues to use illustrations and to use bold print or headings to help them understand the text. First graders learn to sequence events in a story, identify the main idea, and provide support from the text for their answers. They ask and answer questions regarding the text they have listened to or read and compare and contrast characters, events, or stories.

Writing is strengthened by including details, temporal words to signal event order and to provide some sense of closure. (2010 AZ ELAS Writing Standards) Informative and narrative writings include details, sequence of events, how-to step by step instructions, and the use of technology and digital resources to support their positions, for research, and technology is used for publication.

First graders build on others' talk in conversations by responding to the comments of others. They ask questions to clear up confusion about the topics and texts under discussion. They describe people, places, things, and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly. First grade students produce complete sentences when appropriate to task and situations. (Arizona English Language Arts Standards for Speaking and Listening, 2010)

Vocabulary and comprehension continue to be enhanced through read aloud stories or books, realia, multi-sensory techniques and re-enactments. Higher level read aloud books assist with the development of advanced language patterns, the acquisition of new vocabulary, the development of critical thinking, and the introduction of new ideas. Direct and explicit instruction in new vocabulary is an integral part of the daily learning experience.

Students who struggle receive targeted, specific intervention instruction; and those who excel are provided with enrichment opportunities. Learning is enhanced through collaboration and

discussions with their peers. Through scaffolded experiences and gradual release, first graders are encouraged to move toward independence in their work as they build confidence in their language, reading and writing abilities. Students will read between 47 and 62+ correct words per minute by the end of first grade.

Second Grade

Students in the second grade continue to build on the skills they learned in first grade, developing the more complex orthographic features of spelling with vowel teams, consonant clusters and multi-syllable words. They are now able to read and spell fluently at grade level no longer needing to decode one syllable words (cvc, cvvc, etc) sound by sound. Second graders spend time developing fluency with text and they begin to independently explore and read books outside of the required course work. They are beginning to read for meaning and may venture into simple chapter books. Classroom instruction includes word study on prefixes and suffixes, word structure, syllabication, different parts of a book (table of contents, introduction, etc.), reading graphs and maps, and using a dictionary. Much time is spent reading informational text. The second grade student uses knowledge of word structure, letter-sound relationships, and syllabication, to enhance their understandings and to help with meaning of text; and through this process add words to their vocabulary. They self correct and read with higher degrees of automaticity. Highest levels of vocabulary development continue to come from books that are read aloud and from direct and explicit vocabulary instruction.

Second grade students participate in collaborative conversations. They build on others' talk in discussions by linking their comments to the remarks of others. They ask for clarification and further explanation as needed to deepen their understanding. Second grade students tell a story or recount an experience with facts and details, speaking audibly in coherent, complete sentences. (AZ 2010 English Language Arts Standards for Speaking and Listening)

Comprehension continues to be enhanced through the teacher led use of graphic organizers (making transparent how text is organized), through the use of higher level questioning, teacher read aloud, teacher think aloud, modeling, and collaborative discussions. The second grade student compares and contrasts within one text, can determine cause and effect, and the author's purpose. They can retell and summarize a text.

Technology is used for supporting reading and writing. Second graders write well elaborated narratives that include a short sequence of events and details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings. They use temporal words to signal event order and they participate in shared research and writing projects. They write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, and use facts and definitions to develop points Writing includes word knowledge of spelling and pronunciation. Underlining, finding information in the text, and mnemonics are used as study skills. Students provide opinions using linking words to supply reasons, and providing a concluding statement.

Teachers continue to use realia, direct and explicit instruction, and multi-sensory methods to enhance reading instruction. Students who struggle receive targeted, specific intervention

instruction, and those who excel are provided with enrichment opportunities. Students will read between 82 and 102+ correct words per minute by the end of second grade. Differentiated instruction across the curriculum (all content areas) is provided for students who excel as well as for students who are second language learners, special education (exceptional education) learners, and at-risk populations. Effective literacy instruction includes language, listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Third Grade

Building on the foundations laid in prior years (advanced phonics studies, vocabulary, and automaticity) students in the third grade understand and apply the orthography of the English language system. They transition from sight-word and decoding skills, to new and challenging content-area text structures. Some students may need continued instruction on earlier basic skills and also need continued instruction on interpreting and comprehending what they read. Third grade students read with expression and continue to develop fluency and the ability to understand more sophisticated text structure.

Additional language instruction includes building background knowledge, increasing expressive language that includes syntax (word order) and grammar (sentence structure), and intentional vocabulary with metaphors, similes and multiple meanings. Students use morphological knowledge of prefixes and suffixes to assist with vocabulary understanding. They use richer vocabulary in their writing as well as in speaking. Deep vocabulary and comprehension continue to be enhanced through teacher directed instruction, books read aloud, higher level questioning, and purposeful discussions. Students use graphic organizers to support their learning and to deepen their understanding of text structures. They compare and contrast, use inference, identify the author's purpose, and retell and summarize with their point of view.

Technology is used for research and to support reading and writing across content areas. Third graders begin to use a variety of reference materials including online materials in their research. Students write paragraphs stating their opinions, writing information or writing about a life experience. Finding information in the text continues to be practiced in a variety of ways. Graphic organizers are introduced as a method for note taking, text organization and writing support. Teachers continue to use realia, direct and explicit instruction, and multi-sensory methods to enhance reading and writing instruction.

Third graders engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions, building on others' ideas and expressing their own ideas clearly. They ask questions to check their understanding of information presented, stay on topic, and link their comments to the remarks of others. Third grade students explain their own ideas and understanding in light of discussions. They ask and answer questions about information from a speaker, offering appropriate elaboration and detail. They speak ¬in complete sentences and provide requested details or clarification. (AZ 2010 English Language Arts Standards for Speaking and Listening)

Students who struggle receive targeted, specific intervention instruction and those who excel are provided with enrichment opportunities. Students will read between 100-121+ correct words per minute by the end of 3rd grade. Differentiated instruction across the curriculum (all content areas) is provided for students who excel as well as for students who are second language

learners, special education (exceptional education) learners, and at-risk population. Effective literacy instruction includes language, listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Fourth Grade

Students at this grade level read and comprehend material from a variety of genres and across content areas. The fourth grade student uses previously learned literacy skills to understand the complex texts found in content areas. Fourth grade students continue to apply morphology (prefixes and suffixes) to read the unfamiliar multisyllabic words they encounter. Morphology instruction continues as students are introduced to Latin and Greek roots and continue to build on syllable structure for spelling. Students continue to acquire vocabulary through direct, explicit instruction of word study and word knowledge along with their continued experiences with text.

The fourth grade student continues to hone the skills learned in previous grades for understanding text and continue to focus on higher level thinking and questioning skills. They question the text as readers and make connections to self, other texts, and the world. These skills help the students to analyze their reading, make generalizations, draw conclusions and question the author's point of view. Students use graphic organizers for writing and organizing their thoughts across content areas and to aid in comprehension while reading.

Student writing includes well organized paragraphs that include descriptors, clarity and elaboration. Fourth grade students write their opinions and reasons, develop topics with facts for informational writing and write relevant and detailed stories. They work in cooperative groups and engage in student discussions and critical thinking skills around the reading and writing assignments. Fourth grade students follow directions and make inferences, sequence events, self monitor and problem solve when they struggle with reading or writing. Classroom instruction on research methodologies continues as well as a concentrated focus on strategies and additional practice to assist with literacy. The use of technology supports reading, writing and research across content areas.

Fourth grade students engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions. They explicitly draw on preparation and other information to explore ideas under discussion. They pose and respond to specific questions to clarify or follow up on information, make comments that contribute to the discussion, and link to the remarks of others. Fourth graders review the key ideas expressed and explain their own ideas and understanding in light of the discussion. They paraphrase portions of information presented in diverse media. They report and write on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience in an organized manner, using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace. Fourth grade students use formal English when appropriate to task and situation. (AZ 2010 English Language Arts Standards for Speaking and Listening)

Teachers continue to use realia, direct and explicit instruction, and multi-sensory methods to enhance reading instruction. Students will read 115-133+ correct words per minute by the end of 4th grade. Differentiated instruction across the curriculum (all content areas) is provided for students who excel as well as for students who are second language learners, special

education (exceptional education) learners, and at-risk populations. Effective literacy instruction includes language, listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Fifth Grade

Fifth grade students apply advanced word study skills as they read unfamiliar multisyllabic words in and out of context. They learn new vocabulary through direct explicit instruction in morphology, through building knowledge of root words, prefixes, and suffixes, and through reading a variety of texts. Students use graphic organizers for writing and organizing their thoughts across content areas and to aid in comprehension while reading.

These students are able to identify and discuss the differences across a variety of genres and content areas. Fifth grade students analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text, and integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject (2010 Arizona English Language Arts).

Higher level thinking skills are used to comprehend and to write. Fifth grade students use reference materials to support their opinions and they identify persuasive techniques in text. Their writing is clear and descriptive, includes higher level vocabulary and correct conventions. Fifth grade students produce coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience (2010 Arizona English Language Arts Writing). Students are able to make independent revisions. The use of technology for research and for recalling relevant information supports the writing of short research projects. These projects use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic (2010 Arizona English Language Arts Writing).

Fifth Grade Students engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. They pose and respond to specific questions, elaborate on the remarks of others, review the key ideas expressed and draw conclusions. (AZ 2010 ELAS Speaking and Listening). Fifth grade students report on a topic, sequencing ideas and use appropriate facts or descriptive details to support main ideas or themes. Fifth grade students speak clearly, using formal academic English (AZ 2010 English Language Arts Standards for Speaking and Listening).

Students will read between 130 and 150 correct wpm at the end of 5th grade. Differentiated instruction across the curriculum (all content areas) is provided for students who excel as well as for students who are second language learners, special education (exceptional education) learners, and at-risk populations. Effective literacy instruction includes language, listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Additional information can be found in the English Language Learners section and Literacy Instruction for Students With Disabilities section of the Arizona State Literacy Plan.

Grades 6 through 8

Introduction

The purpose of this plan is to increase all students' overall levels of literacy proficiency, ensure that students who have met or exceeded the 2010 Arizona English Language Arts Standards will continue to meet increased rigor in leading to successful acquisition of the College and Career Readiness Standards. In addition, this plan will help at risk students acquire the skills and knowledge required to meet and exceed grade-level standards. Middle grade students gain stamina and automaticity through a plan of literacy instruction that will increase their abilities to use text to build thinking skills that will allow them to produce both written and oral products. Students will grow from acquisition of comprehension skills and strategies toward strategic application of those skills and strategies within multiple texts and settings. Students move from the focus on decoding and using strategies toward a focus on vocabulary, comprehension and morphology/study of meaningful word parts, leading to application and understanding of content area informational texts. Middle grade students expand and write more complex pieces for a wide variety of purposes, audiences and genres. Students are able to effectively engage in complex discussions on a wide variety of topics. Student learning and motivation are enhanced by a connection to cultural experience and personal relevance.

Effective instruction will include systematic delivery of standards and is evidenced by planning guides and curriculum maps. Teacher planning in all areas of effective instructional practice is essential and needs to include cross curricular team members and collaboration.

Instructional Components

According to the Arizona 2010 English Language Arts Standards, students in grades 6-8 will confront an expanding volume of language, reading and writing expectations. While students build on K-5 foundational literacy skills and strategies, demands for comprehension and communication of more complex text and content specific information increases. With the expectation that phonemic awareness, basic phonics and fluency are mastered, the focus shifts to the remaining components of the National Reading Panel's Big Five: vocabulary and comprehension. Listening, speaking, viewing and writing are interwoven components that support complex text application demonstrating students' increasing abilities in critical thinking and reasoning. Key instructional components are vocabulary, comprehension of increasingly complex text, listening/speaking/viewing, and writing. Underlying all instruction is the awareness that motivation and an appreciation of reading are crucial for the adolescent learner's success. (Snow, Burns and Griffin,1998).

Vocabulary

Rich vocabulary is acquired through wide reading, read aloud, and direct instruction. All classrooms should spend time on specific vocabulary word instruction, developing word walls, while keeping in mind that students acquire around 5-8 words per week. The focus is on academic words and phrases, content specific words and multiple meaning words that the learner is unlikely to know within complex text. Students learn technical, connotative and figurative meanings and use the words in a variety of appropriate contexts. Effective direct instruction includes repeated exposures to words that connect to students' prior knowledge and experiences through listening, speaking, and writing activities. Building word meaning involves integration of spelling patterns, syntax/word order, morphology/meaningful word parts and etymology/word origins, including advanced word study of Latin and Greek affixes and roots.

Comprehension

Comprehension skills and strategies enable students to evaluate complex text (multiple ideas, layers of meaning or purpose, and sophisticated vocabulary) across a range of genre and content areas. In writing and speaking, students benefit from modeling and guided practice as they frame and support conclusions from literature, informational text and media through logical inferences and specific evidence. Students move from collaborative to independent work, building from the low level skills of recall to demonstrating skills and concepts, to showing strategic thinking and finally to exhibiting the advanced skills of extended thinking, synthesizing and creating.

Writing

Varied complex and lengthy written tasks in the middle grades involve daily engagement and response to complex text including informational and explanatory writing, arguments, narratives, and research projects. In order to focus on content and meaning, students need to be instructed and practice basic skills such as handwriting and keyboarding. Fundamental application of formal English language conventions (grammar) need to be taught as writing and spelling skills are applied with greater sophistication. To strengthen coherent writing skills, students need direct instruction in process writing, including planning, revising, editing and rewriting. The critical focus is on student's use of increasingly sophisticated thinking processes.

Speaking and Listening

Listening, speaking, and viewing in various academic settings (partner, small group, whole group) continue to be essential components in comprehending more complex information, ideas, and evidence. Oral language activities involve formal presentations as well as informal extended discussions to build background knowledge, key vocabulary, syntax, and content. Student interactions also provide a forum for organization of thought, use of academic language and rehearsal of comprehension strategies, which supports both writing and reading comprehension. Just as in writing it is critical that students demonstrate increasing sophistication in thinking by developing arguments and support for oral information. Even for students who meet grade-level expectations, oral language comprehension may outstrip reading comprehension until seventh or eighth grade (Biemiller, 1999).

Motivation

Motivation involves the successful implementation of the instructional components and appropriate scaffolds for every student. "They should provide a supportive environment that views mistakes as growth opportunities, encourages self-determination, and provides informational feedback about the usefulness of reading strategies and how the strategies can be modified to fit various tasks" (Graham & Hegert, 2008).

Two elements are essential for students to feel successful. First, effective content area instruction needs to incorporate reading skills necessary to enable all learners to access the material. Knowledge needs to be connected with, through, and across disciplines.
Second is a structure of differentiated support for levels of learners. Content area instruction supports reading intervention and can also be designed to support reading skills that aide students in reading and comprehending content area text. Every student needs to be provided access to grade level content using scaffolding supports when necessary. In addition, struggling students need individual plans that, in addition to regular classroom differentiated instruction, provide extra time and intensity in fundamental skills, as determined by appropriate assessments. The 2010 ELAS give teachers great latitude in selection of curriculum materials and allows teachers to focus on text of high interest to students.

Text Complexity

Being able to read and comprehend complex text independently and proficiently is essential for high achievement. There is an extensive body of research that demonstrates that teaching based solely on higher order thinking was not enough to ensure that students were ready for college and careers. Text complexity, was at least as important, to student success, as what they could do with what they read.

The English Language Arts Standards define a three part model for determining text complexity. "This model is to be used together with grade-specific standards that require increasing sophistication in students' reading comprehension ability (Reading Standards 1-9). The Standards thus approach the intertwined issues of what and how students read." (Arizona Department of Education, ELAS, Appendix A, 2010) The following is a summary of the Standards three-part model of text complexity:

1. Qualitative Dimensions of Text Complexity (measured by the reader)– levels of meaning or purpose; structure; language conventionality and clarity; and knowledge demands. These are readily measurable by teachers as they plan and select materials for instruction.
2. Quantitative Dimensions of Text Complexity (measured by readability formulas, i.e. Flesch-Kincaid, Dale-Chall, Lexile Framework) – word length, sentence length, and text –cohesion. Quantitative measures are not easily discernable by humans and are more frequently based upon computer readability formulas.
3. Reader and Task Considerations (match text for students) – Teachers use professional judgment to select appropriate text for students based on the purpose of the task. This factor brings into account student motivation, background knowledge, purpose and interest levels.

Instructional Practices

Once a student learns to read and write in the early grades, formal instruction should not end. A firm foundation of literacy strategies ensures that an intermediate/middle school student will be able to master every new reading and writing task successfully. Starting in the middle grades, students encounter more complex texts in a variety of content areas which require different reading approaches from those used in the primary grades. They begin to "refine their reading preferences and lay the groundwork for lifelong reading habits. They begin to use reading to help answer profound questions about themselves and the world" (IRA and NMSA,2001). Students should be expected to sustain silent reading over longer texts, gain information through reading and read for different purposes in multiple genres, expand vocabulary, and broaden their knowledge from texts that are new and unfamiliar.

To be most effective, instruction needs to be embedded in the content being presented, taught by knowledgeable subject area educators who focus on language development (whole/small group discussions, think-pair-share) reading (vocabulary, oral reading, fluency, comprehension) and writing strategies specific to their curriculum. Students increasingly use text to learn new knowledge, formulate thinking, develop writing and present in oral formats. It is recommended that students receive two to three hours of daily engagement with texts, including literacy instruction as needed, in order to see improvement in reading skills and their application. Adolescents should continue to build reading fluency as text becomes more complex. Vocabulary knowledge, domain-specific and domain-general content knowledge, higher-level reasoning and thinking skills and cognitive strategies become the focus and can be applied

specifically to enhance reading comprehension of increasingly complex and content specific text. There is strong evidence that motivation and interest in reading decline after the early elementary grades; this is particularly true for students who have struggled during the initial stages of learning to read. Therefore, planning for motivation and engagement for struggling students becomes critical.

Research-Based Effective Practices Cross the Curriculum

There is evidence that students are more successful in a classroom where routines and procedures are clearly delineated. Creating a classroom instruction model that can be replicated across grade levels and subject areas helps students feel comfortable and familiar. Adolescents need to interact and learn with their peers. Content teachers must determine which reading strategies are crucial for understanding the content, choose diverse texts, embed word knowledge, monitor oral reading fluency, teach and practice comprehension and writing strategies in daily lesson plans, and support readers as they learn to incorporate the reading strategies into their assigned reading tasks.

Five Areas of Instructional Practice in Content Classes (related to 2010 Arizona English Language Arts Standards)

1. **Increase the Amount of Explicit Instruction in and Support for the Use of Effective Comprehension Strategies throughout the School Day**
    - Active comprehension monitoring that leads to the use of fix-up strategies when comprehension fails
    - Use of graphic and semantic organizers, including story maps
    - Question generation
    - Summarization, paraphrasing and selective rereading
2. **Increase the Amount and Quality of Open, sustained Discussion of Reading Content**
    - Discussion about text is a direct way to increase students' ability to think about and learn from text
    - During discussions, students can be directly led to engage in the thoughtful analysis of text in ways that support their comprehension when they are reading on their own
    - In addition to its impact on reading comprehension, increasing the amount of high-quality discussion of reading content is frequently cited as a way to increase engagement in reading and reading-based assignments
3. **Set and maintain rigor for the level of text, conversation, questions, and vocabulary that are used in oral discussions and written assignments**
    - "…the goal is not simply to enable students to obtain facts or literal meaning from text (although that is clearly desirable), but also to make deeper interpretations, generalizations and conclusions." (p. 21, IES Practice Guide, 2008)
    - The learner will be able to summarize major ideas, provide evidence in support of an argument, and analyze and interpret causal relations
    - Discussion will promote students' comprehension of complex text and focus on building a deeper understanding of the author's meaning through sustained exchanges with the teacher and other students. "In effective discussions students

have the opportunity to have sustained exchanges with the teacher or other students, present and defend individual interpretations and points of view, use text content, background knowledge, and reasoning to support interpretations and conclusions, and listen to the points of view and reasoned arguments of others participating in the discussion." (IES Practice Guide, 2008)

4. **Increase the Use of a Variety of Practices to Increase Motivation and Engagement in Reading. Effective Instruction for Adolescent Readers (2004) identified four instructional practices with significant effect sizes:**
    - Content goals for instruction, meaning that students have interesting learning goals to achieve through their reading activities;
    - Choice and autonomy support-that students were allowed a reasonable range of choices of reading materials and activities;
    - Interesting multiple leveled texts;
    - Opportunities to collaborate with other students in discussion and assignment groups to achieve their learning goals.
5. **Teach Essential Content Knowledge and Vocabulary So That All Students Master Critical Concepts**
    - "Content area teachers should identify the key concepts, principles and vocabulary for each unit they are teaching that they would like every student to know. The goal is to identify those concepts, principles and vocabulary that represent the most essential information in the unit of study" (Torgesen, 2007)
    - Explicit instruction in vocabulary, teachers help the learner with the meaning of new words and strengthen their independent skills of construction the meaning of text (IES Practice Guide, 2008)

"Researchers know that reading and writing often draw from the same pool of background knowledge--for example, a general understanding of the attributes of texts at the same time however, writing differs from reading. While readers form a mental representation of thoughts written by someone else, writers formulate their own thoughts, organize them and create a written record of them using the conventions of spelling and grammar. Therefore, although writing and reading are both vital aspects of literacy, they each require their own dedicated instruction. What improves reading does not always improve writing. This report responds to the strong need for information about how to improve classroom writing instruction to address the serious problem of adolescent writing difficulty." (Writing Next, pg. 8, 2007)

Focus on the 11 elements of effective writing instruction in middles schools as referenced in Writing Next by Graham & Perin, (2006), p. 3. Used with Permission

11 Elements of Effective Writing:

1. **Writing Strategies for planning, revising, and editing compositions;**
2. **Strategies to summarize texts;**
3. **Collaborative writing in which students work together to plan, draft, revisie, and edit compositions;**
4. **Specific product goals with expectations for completion'**
5. **Use of technology for writing assignments;**
6. **Sentence combining techniques to encourage the writing of complex sentences**

7. **Prewriting to generate ideas for compositions;**
8. **Inquiry activities to engage students in data analysis as the basis for organizing ideas and content**
9. **Process writing to extend skills instruction by writing for authentic purposes and audiences;**
10. **Models of exemplary writing for analysis and emulation;**
11. **Writing for content learning. (Writing Next Graham & Perin, 2006, p. 3)**

Responding to text (additional explanation)

1. **Writing personal reactions, analyzing and interpreting the text,**
2. **Writing summaries of a text; writing notes about a text,**
3. **Answering questions about a text in writing or creating and answering written questions about a text**
4. **The process of writing including text structures, paragraph and sentence construction skills;**
5. **Spelling and sentence construction skills**
6. **Spelling skills. (Writing to Read, Graham & Heber, 2010, pg. 5)**

Teachers must know how to help students and provide ample opportunities for selecting the texts they read discussing their reading with peers; as well as meeting the needs of students who are proficient learners.

Differentiation

All students, including highest performers and at risk students, benefit from literacy instruction provided within a continuum of support that provides instruction that is needs-based and involves active engagement, teacher modeling, and feedback. Highest performing students should be provided opportunities for appropriate course offerings and services in order to achieve at levels commensurate with the students' intellect and abilities. At risk students, including English Language Learners, and Special Education students must be provided extra time and appropriate learning opportunities that are systematic, intensive and of sufficient duration to accelerate students. Considerations should be given for extended opportunities to learn materials in a variety of interactive strategies. Please refer to these sections of the plan for further information.

Grades 9-12

Introduction

The literacy demands of the 21st century are increasingly sophisticated, nuanced and complex, thus requiring the same explicit, systematic literacy instruction received during the middle grades, but with increased focus on using and demonstrating thinking and application of knowledge in rigorous, authentic and engaging situations. The knowledge and skills required for higher education and for employment are now considered equivalent (Graham and Perin, 2007). In addition, low student achievement in high school leads to higher dropout rates, entrance into the juvenile justice system, and unemployment (RAND Reading Study Group, 2002). In addition to regular differentiated grade level instruction, schools must provide interventions that effectively close the gap for at risk students. Therefore, during the 9-12 grade age spans, the purpose of literacy instruction is to continue preparing literate individuals who can:

- independently build their knowledge base through research and study
- respond aptly to a wide range of communication environments, situations, and contexts
- comprehend, critique, and weigh evidence to understand and evaluate an author's argument, craft, and product
- leverage technology and digital media appropriately and efficiently to accomplish a task
- actively seek to understand and communicate effectively with people from a wide range of backgrounds, cultures, and world (Arizona Department of Education, 2010)
- Use text to gain information, build thinking, write convincingly and speak effectively.

In addition to authentically applying content-area literacy skills, high school teachers need to maintain high literacy standards for all students. Although less skilled readers or writers need differentiated instruction, including additional opportunities for learning, these students are still expected to accomplish content-area literacy tasks and learn the content. Thus, content teachers need to utilize a differentiated approach to literacy instruction which is scaffolded and allows these students access to the literacy standards. In addition, schools need to provide intensive interventions to close the gaps for at risk learners. On-going professional development and collaboration with literacy experts and reading specialists, will assist content-area teachers in using instructional strategies to support literacy instruction in their content areas. In the school library, print and online text are carefully selected to supplement curriculum with informational and recreational text. Librarians can match text to the varied reading levels of students, build higher reading achievement and provide support for content teachers. Excellent content-area literacy instruction must be systematic and purposeful, with full administrative support and teacher accountability.

Ideally all students would enter high school with 9th grade reading proficiency, but realistically some students will still need interventions and remediation. To address the needs of struggling students, reading experts must provide timely, targeted, explicit reading and writing instruction. Therefore, to be truly comprehensive, a 9-12 literacy program involves all high school teachers providing appropriate content-area literacy instruction and reading experts providing specific literacy interventions. An effective intervention program must also have the support of school leaders and be just as strategic and data-informed as the content-area literacy instruction. "A high level of literacy cannot be acquired during a few school years or rest solely on the efforts of individual students or teachers. Helping our nation's students become good readers and writers is a collaborative effort involving all stakeholders in the educational process," (Graham and Herbert, 2010, pg. 28).

Finally, self-reflection, self-monitoring, and self-efficacy become increasingly important as students near the end of their K-12 experience and prepare for adult life, the work force, a career or college. To encourage goal setting and self-reflection, the Arizona Board of Education

has ruled that, “Effective for the graduation class of 2013, schools shall complete for every student in grades 9-12 an Arizona Education and Career Action Plan (“ECAP”) prior to graduation... ” During this process, students set academic, career, post-secondary, and extra-curricular goals and “schools shall monitor, review and update each Education and Career Action Plan at least annually.” Ultimately, the purpose of the 9-12 grade span for literacy instruction is to give all students the opportunity for post-secondary success in a global environment and an avenue for personal fulfillment and life-long learning. For information on ECAP, please see: http://www.ade.az.gov/ecap/.

Instructional Components

Factors to consider when addressing adolescent reading skills include the following: speed and accuracy when reading text (fluency), vocabulary, background knowledge, comprehension strategies, text complexity, close reading and motivation. Students should be involved with increasingly complex text and required to demonstrate rigorous writing and thinking skills. Classrooms should balance concept acquisition, with students thinking and producing products with high levels of intellectual involvement. In addition, writing, formal presentation skills, and discussion /collaboration skills are essential for success in the workplace and post-secondary schooling.

Motivation and Cognitive Engagement

“Correlational evidence suggests that motivation to read school-related texts declines as students progress from elementary to middle school. The strongest decline is observed among struggling students.”(Kamil, Borman, Dole, Kral, Salinger and Torgeson, 2008). By high school, poor motivation becomes a major obstacle to improving reading achievement. A student must be motivated and cognitively engaged in order to make the desired gains in reading achievement and be college and career ready. All educational personnel must intentionally address the wide range of factors that contribute to intrinsic motivation and positive cognitive engagement.

According to Jerry Valentine, “For most students…attendance, attention, and cognitive engagement are linked to learning through student motivation,” and for most students, the desire (motivation) to cognitively engage is the result of teacher-student relationships, emotional security and self-confidence, a positive learning environment, identified learning goals, relevant content, and realistically challenging learning experiences. (Guthrie 2001; Willingham 2009; Valentine 2009).

The 2010 Arizona English Language Arts Standards give teachers flexibility in choosing curriculum and materials and allow teachers to involve students with text of high interest and stimulating content. When learning goals are co-determined by the student and teacher, cognitive engagement increases, which in turn, positively affects reading and writing achievement (Marzano, 2001). Classrooms should focus on high levels of student engagement and should visibly involve all students in activities that exhibit their intellectual involvement with the curriculum. “Engaged readers seek to understand; they enjoy learning and they believe in their reading abilities. They are mastery oriented, intrinsically motivated, and have self-efficacy.” (Guthrie, 2001). Addressing the conditions that increase student motivation and cognitive engagement is essential, not optional, if students are going to make the literacy strides needed for the 21st Century.

Reading

Phonological Awareness, Decoding/Encoding, and Fluency

In addition to the teaching of grade level expectations, some adolescent learners lack phonological awareness, decoding/encoding skills and basic fluency (speed and accuracy), and vocabulary skills. These students require timely, targeted, and explicit instructional interventions from trained literacy experts. All teachers must give all students differentiated instruction to improve reading with expression and emphasis (prosody), and to apply decoding techniques to unknown or difficult words.

Background Knowledge

Marilyn Adams (2010) adds that the ability to use comprehension strategies and make inferences cannot make up for the lack of domain-specific knowledge (p.8). Recent cognitive science research indicates most students require a knowledge base from which to learn. According to Daniel T. Willingham,(2009) “Data from the last 30 years lead to a conclusion that is not scientifically challengeable: thinking well requires knowing facts,...The very processes that teachers care about most--critical thinking processes like reasoning and problem solving -- are intimately intertwined with factual knowledge that is in long term memory...” (p.8). As a result, high school teachers should continue to build students’ content-area knowledge while students hone their ability to integrate their new knowledge with their background knowledge to comprehend increasingly complex text and learn more content.

Close Reading

As students gain rich, content area knowledge, they need to use close reading skills to comprehend increasingly complex text that matches the reading demands of college and career readiness standards. Teachers must assist students in navigating a variety of complex, authentic text from their discipline so that students not only build their content-area knowledge, but also become skilled readers, listeners, and viewers in that particular discipline. All content area teachers must explicitly teach vocabulary and literacy skills that are relevant to their content areas. Skilled readers must be able to independently use their background knowledge and comprehension strategies such as predicting, using text structures, questioning, connecting, summarizing, paraphrasing and self-monitoring to understand text, to build more content knowledge. Since each discipline, content-area and course has its own vocabulary, kind of evidence, and expressive structures, each high school teacher is responsible for assuring that students can comprehend increasingly complex text from their discipline.

As students improve their close reading and analytical skills in each content-area course, they will need opportunities to synthesize, apply, and integrate information within and across content areas. The amount of information available to our learners necessitates that each individual acquire the skills to select, evaluate, and use information appropriately and effectively. Students need to work collaboratively and independently with a wide variety of texts in a range of formats to develop digital, information, aesthetic, and cultural literacy. Ultimately, students who can access, comprehend, evaluate, accurately synthesize and integrate sophisticated information from a variety of sources will be ready for post-secondary work experiences, career training, college study, and personal growth.

At this grade span a variety of reading texts should be taught including seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and nineteenth-century foundational U.S. documents of historical and literary significance.Text involvement should include literature and informational text with an emphasis

on identifying the authors' purpose or opinions and the presented supporting evidence. Students will analyze multiple texts for theme similarity and differences, providing evidence to support their claims. They will study increasingly complex text that will include figurative and connotative meanings, analyzing the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings.

Writing

Responding to text, thinking, discussing, creating and writing arguments are critical skills in all content areas. Teachers should routinely require students to use writing as a tool for determining central ideas, drawing conclusions, and supporting analyses (Arizona 2010 English Language Arts Standards). Students should regularly be required to create written material that demonstrates knowledge of content, using appropriate and varied transitions, demonstrating knowledge of writing conventions and incorporating appropriate levels of complexity, skills in critical thinking and at a high level of intellectual rigor.

In the 9-12 grade span, the emphasis is mostly informational and argumentative writing (analyses of text, academic essays, proposals, critiques, policy recommendations, editorials, etc.). Students develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, use words and phrases to link major sections of text and provide concluding statements that support the argument presented. Excellent argumentation incorporates the best of narrative and expository writing while it inherently demands logic, reliable and sufficient evidence (research), content knowledge, and a keen sense of rhetorical context. As Mike Schmoker delineates, "Being skilled in argument equips all students—college bound or not—to become intelligent, contributing employees and citizens". (Schmoker, 2007, p. 65)

Students produce short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem. Students gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively.

In addition, writing is a vehicle for assessing domain-specific vocabulary and content. For example, students use writing to explain content area ideas; defend, support, and argue claims; and convey what they have observed, imagined or felt, while addressing the rhetorical demands unique to each task. Just as content-area reading instruction focuses on texts common in each discipline; likewise, content-area writing instruction targets explicit instruction in the written products typical for each content-area. Students should be required to write drafts and final compositions in all content areas to demonstrate their grasp of concepts (domain-specific vocabulary), their content knowledge, and their ever improving compositional skills.

Speaking and Listening

The ability to express ideas orally is foundational for learning. Personal interactions, presentation of ideas and academic discussions are based on oral language skills. Throughout the syllabus for every discipline, the opportunity for practice must be purposeful, varied and frequent in order to gain proficiency. Within each content area students must be required to

create oral presentations that demonstrate rigorous levels of thinking in order to be college and career ready.

Workers and learners of the 21st century increasingly depend on their ability to participate effectively in a wide range of conversations, both highly structured and minimally organized, with diverse collaborators and audiences. Effective participation is characterized by listening attentively, expressing ideas clearly and persuasively, contributing or identifying relevant information, and synthesizing the best ideas or information as defined by the standards of evidence appropriate to a particular discipline or context. Students must also be able to follow discussion protocols as well as provide leadership to situations where organization is absent, but needed (2010 Arizona English Language Arts Standards). To gain expertise in discussing and collaborating, all content area teachers must provide ample opportunities for extended discussion of text meaning, language usage and interpretation, as well as time to collaborate on written assignments, projects and presentations.

Language

To be career and college ready, students must be able to apply standard English usage, grammar, capitalization, punctuation and spelling when writing/speaking in rhetorical contexts that require formal, standard English. Indeed, the ability to purposefully adjust one's grammar, usage and conventions according to the audience, purpose, task, and situation is a skill that recognizes the inherent variability and complexity of communicating in the 21st century. In an ever complex work environment and global learning community, English language users should be able to adapt their language to the situation, whether it be formal or informal. In order to do this effectively, students must be knowledgeable about the English language, both its standard and less standard forms, in order to make effective language choices or analyze how authors' use language to better understand and evaluate a written or spoken piece.

Vocabulary

The evidence is very strong that direct instruction in word meanings and word learning strategies contributes to improved comprehension of ever increasing complex text and the ability to participate in academic discussions. As Marilyn Adams concludes, "Words are not just words. They are the nexus—the interface—between communication and thought. When we read, it is through words that we build, refine, and modify our knowledge. What makes vocabulary valuable and important is not the words themselves so much as the understandings they afford." (Adams, 2009).

Knowing that students receive direct instruction in word meanings and analysis in the younger grades, 9-12 teachers must continue explicit vocabulary instruction, rich with domain-specific concepts and related academic language. In addition, all students must be competent, independent word learners (skilled users of morphemic knowledge, context clues, reference books) since it is impossible to teach every word. (Graves, 2006). One unmistakable way to increase vocabulary is to read widely about a topic. The added benefits are increased background knowledge, which leads to improved comprehension, which helps a student to think critically about a complex issue. "To grow, our students must read lots. More specifically, they must read lots of 'complex' texts--texts that offer them new language, new knowledge, and new modes of thought." (Adams, 2010, p.9).

Instructional Strategies

All students enter high school with a developing sense of self and a variety of cultural, social, and educational experiences. Traditionally, educators have emphasized the difference between oral language and written language. The 21st century student, however, needs to learn to discriminate the difference between social speech/writing and academic speech/writing. When educators view our diverse learners as assets with potential to grow (rather than burdens with deficits to fix), all learners are regarded with dignity and worth. We must start from where students are with the goal of taking them as far as they can go, efficiently, effectively and with respect to who they are becoming. Therefore, building students' self-awareness as language users, meta-cognition as learners, and self-efficacy as capable adults should be an aspect of any instructional strategy.

The instructional strategies listed below are powerful, research-based, practices which will work in all content areas. The instructional components in the previous section were listed separately, yet in reality, they often work together, in concert with each other; such is the nature of literacy instruction and achievement. Therefore, the instructional components are grouped as they might naturally often occur in academic or work place situations. This will show the interrelatedness of the instructional components and instructional strategies since the two categories often overlap.

Motivation and Cognitive Engagement

According to John Guthrie, teachers must create an instructional context for engaged reading and literacy development by building in the following characteristics, as they most naturally occur, into daily instruction:

- real world interaction including current events, student interests, or everyday life
- support for setting learning goals and becoming more autonomous
- interesting and varied texts
- strategy instruction, complete with modeling, scaffolding, coaching, and explanations of why and when to use a reading strategy
- collaboration opportunities with classmates and others (experts, media specialist, etc.)
- recognition and praise for effort that is informative, sincere, specific, and sufficient (Marzano 2001)
- evaluation that is more student-centered ad personalized and task oriented rather than grade oriented (Kamil, et.al, 2008; Guthrie 2001).

Each of the listed instructional characteristics are even more powerful when they work together to create what Guthrie calls instructional coherence. For instance, "when real-world interactions are closely aligned with interesting texts, coherence is increased...When strategy instruction is linked to central knowledge goals...[or] when collaboration is merged with autonomy support, coherence rises. When teacher involvement is evident in evaluation, coherence exists. In coherent instruction, student engagement is increased..., conceptual learning from text is facilitated..., reading achievement is fostered..., and curricular integration of reading within content areas can be sustained" (Guthrie 2001). Some of the instructional conditions that lead to increased student motivation and cognitive engagement are also powerful content area literacy instructional practices. (Marzano, 2001)

Reading, Viewing and Listening Comprehension Instructional Strategies (includes vocabulary)

- Incorporate explicit comprehension strategy instruction, including how to summarize and generate questions, Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Review (SQ3R), monitor comprehension (i.e. warm ups, discussions, Directed ReadingThinking Activity (DRTA), Question/Answer Relationship (QAR), anticipation guides, multiple choice, graphic organizers); how to fix comprehension when it breaks down (re-read, context clues, meta-cognitive activities); and how to use the strategies effectively with all types of text
- Model thinking while comprehending
- Offer opportunities for guided practice with opportunities for feedback and student goal setting
- Have students reflect how strategies work by employing meta-cognitive questions
- Incorporate writing as a tool for keeping track of comprehension (i.e. learning logs)
- Incorporate discussion as a way to process text and check for understanding (i.e. Think-Pair-Share, elbow partners, jigsaw, Socratic seminars)
- Include explicit vocabulary instruction and word learning strategies
- Provide background knowledge or the teach the knowledge necessary to understand the text (may include information or a procedure) (Marzano, 2001) (IES, 2008)

Responding to Reading, Viewing or Listening (includes writing, discussion, and collaboration, presentations)

- Incorporate extended discussion of text meaning and interpretation IES 2001, 7)
- Include formal/informal writing assignments appropriate for a wide range of audiences...
- Include student-led or teacher directed investigation of related or parallel topics, using technological tools if appropriate
- Provide opportunities for students to collaboratively and individually:
    - synthesize ideas from multiple sources
    - apply knowledge to real world problems
    - evaluate or critique the effectiveness, craft or structure of multiple texts
    - create original works in multiple formats

Writing Strategies (includes research, knowledge of conventions and language, collaboration)

"No single approach to writing instruction will meet the needs of all students" (Writing Next, 19) thus multiple methods need to be utilized to help students be prepared for the world beyond grade 12.

1. Process Writing and Peer Response
    - brainstorming/prewriting
    - multiple drafts
    - individual and peer editing/critiquing
    - reflection on one's own work.

2. Collaborative Writing

In collaborative writing, adolescents work together (pairs/trios) to:

- plan
- draft
- revise
- edit/peer critique (giving and receiving immediate feedback on language)
- publish a final copy (often at a higher quality than if produced individually)

(Graham & Perin, 2010 p.16; Storch, 2005, p. 168)

“Given that collaborative writing is a common feature of workplace practice, it is important that students are made aware of the ways in which collaboration differs in classroom and professional contexts” (Bremner, 2010 pp. 130-131).

3. Specific Product Goals
Chunking the writing task into accomplishable components and setting goals for the end product helps students to organize their thoughts and make writing more manageable.

To assist younger or low achieving writers, teachers can

- provide the rhetorical parameters for the writing piece (audience, purpose, form requirements, etc)
- provide specific product descriptions or qualities (checklists, rubrics,)
- break up the task to provide feedback or check points so that the task is not overwhelming and corrections can be made before the final copy is completed
- provide and review models/exemplars

For older students or mature writers, teachers should help students to

- break up the task into manageable sections (time management, resource availability, etc)
- set rhetorical parameters for their own writing (which audience, what format, what mode, what information works best, etc)
- create the rubric for evaluating the final product

4. Word Processing and Composing in Multiple Environments
According to the *Framework for Success in Post Secondary Writing*, students and adults often compose electronically and will continue to do so with whatever technologies appear in the future. Teachers can assist students by:

- having them use a variety of technologies including pen & paper
- having struggling writers compose, revise and edit using electronic technologies
- having them practice selecting information responsibly (use citations,etc.) from electronic resources
- using technology strategically and purposefully to improve their writing for a particular audience.
- evaluate the effect of using different technologies for different audiences or purposes (Graham & Perin, 2010, p. 17)

5. Sentence Combining and Grammar
“There seems to be little value in marking student’s papers with corrections, little value in teaching the conventions of mechanics apart from actual writing, and even less value in teaching grammar [in isolation] in order to instill these conventions” (Weaver) Thus, knowledge of language (usage, grammar, syntax, conventions) is best taught in context of real writing such as:

- short daily instruction in grammar and mechanics within writer's workshop;
- using high-quality mentor texts to teach grammar and mechanics in context;
- visual scaffolds, including wall charts, and visual cues that can be pasted into writer's notebooks;
- regular, short routines, like “express-lane edits,” that help students spot and correct errors automatically.
  (Anderson, 2007)

6. Inquiry Activities
Inquiry means engaging students in activities that help them develop ideas and content for a particular writing task by:

- analyzing immediate, concrete data (comparing and contrasting cases or collecting and evaluating evidence) (Graham, et. al. p 19).
- systems analysis (e.g. governments, ecosystems, biomes)
- problem solving
- historical investigation
- invention (e.g. students will utilize methods of hypothesis to create and invent new forms of exercise, use of technology, and experimentation)
- experimental inquiry

Inquiry activities are cross-curricular and build on prior knowledge; thus "the process of explaining their thinking helps students deepen their understanding of the [subject area] principles they are applying" (Marzano, 2001, p.105) while simultaneously improving their writing skills.

7. Formal research
Teachers need to incorporate short or more sustained formal research assignments/projects that require students to do the following:

- narrow or broaden a topic using research strategies (boolean logic, search terms)
- gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources
- formulate and develop a thesis
- assess the credibility and accuracy of each source
- draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research
- synthesize and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism or other ethical missteps
- share knowledge in an appropriate format

8. Rhetorical Awareness
Teachers can help writers develop rhetorical awareness by providing opportunities and guidance for students to:

- identify and practice key rhetorical concepts such as audience, purpose, context, and genre through writing and analysis of a variety of types of texts (nonfiction, informational, imaginative, printed, visual, spatial, auditory, and otherwise);
- write and analyze a variety of types of texts to identify the audiences and purposes for which they are intended
- determine the key choices of content, organization, evidence, and language use made by their author(s),
- determine the relationships among these key choices and the ways that the text(s) appeal or speak to different audiences;
- write for different audiences, purposes, and contexts;
- contribute, through writing, their own ideas and opinions about a topic to an ongoing conversation (written conversations, blogs, social media, etc.)

Speaking and Presenting
Teachers must utilize pedagogy that allows students to:

- learn to work together,

- express and listen carefully to ideas
- integrate information from oral, visual, quantitative, and media sources
- evaluate what they hear
- use media and visual displays strategically to help achieve communicative purposes
- adapt speech to context and task

(2010 Arizona English Language Arts Standards)

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